

'Cuckoo' Revision

Essay questions – choose one, plan for it and write!

1. **Describe** an important visual / oral **symbol or symbols** in a text you have studied **AND** analyse how the symbol(s) helped develop ideas in the text.
2. **Analyse how** TWO or THREE **production techniques** helped develop **your opinion** of a **main character / individual**.
3. **Discuss an idea** in your studied text that caused a strong reaction or interest in you as a reader/audience.
4. **Analyse how** the **ending** of the text helped you to understand the **purpose** of the text more clearly.
5. Explain and discuss **in detail** the **importance of EITHER relationships OR conflicts** in your studied text

Explain and discuss **In detail** the **Importance of**
EITHER relationships OR conflicts in your
studied text - planning

- Opening sequence - The conflict btw M and Ratched is set up right from the beginning of film (high angle shot on him as if she is looking, Mac walks down corridor this contrasts him)
- Therapy sessions
- Party scene
- Strangulation scene

- In One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Milos Forman wants to present Nurse Ratched as an aloof figure who avoids a natural personal relationship with her patients. To emphasise this he deliberately chooses particular shots and angles:
 - low angle shot at a window looking at basketball players
 - often in the nurses station behind glass – even at end
 - seated separately from and directly opposite her patients
 - standing apart from patients

Deeper questions to get you thinking...

- What is the point of this film?
- What is the significance of the title?
- Who was crazy? Who wasn't?
- Why did Chief pretend to be deaf and dumb?
- Why would a mental institution not have more security measures in place?
- Why didn't Mac leave when he had the chance – twice!
- Why did Billy kill himself?
- Did Nurse Ratched change after Mac's death?
- Why was Taber the most excited patient when Chief broke up?
- What did Billy's mother do to him?

Ratched VS McMurphy

- Name the five adjectives that you think most describe each character
- Name at least three symbols associated with each character and describe briefly their significance
- What colours best suit them?
- What lighting best suits them?
- What music best suits them?
- What shots / camera angles best suit them?
- Who are their main relationships with? Why?
- Which scenes are most significant in defining their characters?

Revision Quiz: minor characters

- What is the colour white representative of in this film?

- Compliance... other ideas include sedation, passivity, being controlled.

Who directed this film?

- Milos Forman

- Name three examples from the start of the film where Mac interrupts or influences the daily lives of the patients:

- Kissing the guard (patients above him can see), dancing down the hall, interrupting the card game, talking to Chief
- How does Nurse Ratched ACT in the first therapy scene? (technique – acting)

- Cold, distant, formal. Lower voice, patronising tone.
- Identify a specific example of dialogue which is patronising used by Nurse Ratched in this first therapy scene

- “You mean there’s not a man here that has an opinion on this manner?”
- “I’d like to write in my book that you began the meeting”
- When does Mac first get frustrated?

- When he is not allowed to turn the music down and realises he must take pills with the rest of them
- Who does Nurse Ratched focus on in the third therapy session?

- Billy
- Identify a quotation from this section of the film:



- “You’re coming with me”
 - “I feel big as a damned mountain”
-
- In which scene does the power dynamic between Mac and Nurse Ratched change?

- When Macmurphy loses the baseball vote but proceeds to watch an imaginary TV screen anyway. The other patients ignore Ratched as she loses her cool
- Who is wearing Nurse Ratched's cap at the end of the party and why is the wearing of her cap significant?

- Scanlon; it is significant because it suggests her authority has been soiled.
- How does Mac realise he is committed?

- Washington in the pool scene

AS YOU WATCH, THINK ABOUT HOW THE FOLLOWING WORDS RELATE TO THE FILM:

Madness Conformity VS Non-Conformity
Control Power Freedom Chaos
Danger Recklessness Oppression
Systems Society Rebellion
The Group VS The Individual Humanity
Institutionalisation Respect Trust

Name the following scenes involving the main characters...

AND tell me why the shot is structured in this way



(Macmurphy – the window separates him. He is seen from Nurse Ratched's perspective... she sees his hand as 'staining (her) window')



(Mac has changed back into his beanie etc – the clothes that define him – he is shown in low, shadowy light – this contrasts with the stark and harsh light showing Nurse Ratched)



(you gotta love that expression...)



(taken through the bars – significant)

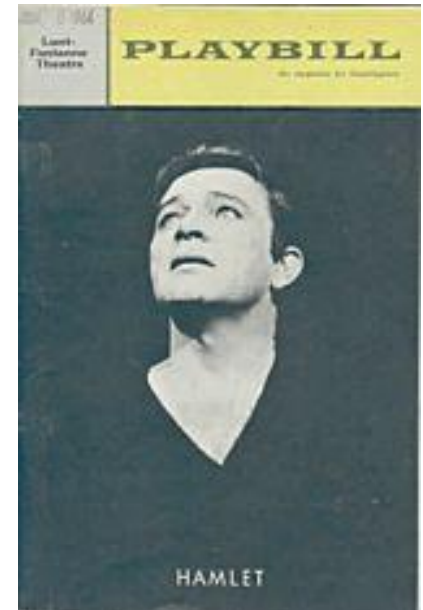


(high angle shot offering a first impression of Mac – he is disadvantaged from the very start...)



... and this is Louise Fletcher nowadays (just in case you were interested)

Minor characters...



Billy Bibbitt

Billy Bibbitt is the _____ in this film.

Techniques showing Billy's status as a _____. Add in significance.

- Costume:

- Appearance:

- Dialogue / Acting:

- Shots / Angles:

- Lighting:

(victim... wears white... stammers... nervous...
shown under similar light as Ratched... he is
under her control... never seen head on..
Slightly high angle...



Charlie Cheswick



Charlie Cheswick's character partially transforms in this movie. We see his brave resistance to Nurse Ratched and watch how he regresses when faced with a punishment. Chief, on the other hand, is able to hold it together enough to sit alongside Mac in a mid-shot which shows the connection between their characters.

What he wears. Technique: _____

How does this change in the film?

Speech. Technique: _____

Examples: _____ Significance:

Angle / position. Technique: _____

Regression - _____ scene. Significance:

(costume... begins to wear less white... speaks out – “Piss on your effing rules Nurse Ratched” – totally unlike his previous meek personality!

Child-like... angles)



Chief Bromden



Chief Bromden is the character that is fully transformed / converted by the end of the film. How do we know this?

Facial expressions. Technique used to show this:

How does this change in the film?

Speech. Technique: _____

How does this change in the film?

Examples: _____ Significance: _____

Actions. Not a specific technique, but mention the partial role reversal btw Chief and Mac

How do they reverse roles?

Note: He may not say much in the end, but this makes all that he does say all the more relevant (with the possible exception of "Ahh, juicyfruit!")



Some evidence

Evidence: **dialogue** to Mac: “I’m not big enough”, “I feel big as a goddamn mountain”. Actions (not a technique): Washstand / links with Mac’s early attempt

Close-up shots showing change from absence of expression to small smiles to dialogue.

the irony of Chief’s transformation is Mac’s decline – he becomes the ‘dumb’ one who cannot escape, except in spirit...

Parallels between Mac and Chief